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Strengthening of the United Nations system

United Nations reform: measures and proposals

Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 3, Political affairs, and section 5, Peacekeeping operations, and the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 related to the peace and security reform

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 3, Political affairs, and section 5, Peacekeeping operations, and the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 related to the peace and security reform (A/72/772). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 3 May 2018.

II. Background

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in October 2017, the Secretary-General submitted his report to the General Assembly on restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar (A/72/525), in which he outlined four main goals of the

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proposed reform to restructure the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Support Office (see A/72/525, sects. III and IV). The four main goals are as follows: (a) prioritize prevention and sustaining peace; (b) enhance the effectiveness and coherence of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, ensuring the primacy of politics and flexibility of approach; (c) make the peace and security pillar more coherent, nimble and effective through a "whole-of-pillar" approach to address fragmentation; and (d) align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars (ibid., para. 14).

3. Subsequently, in its resolution 72/199, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General and supported his vision for reforming the peace and security pillar. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, as soon as possible, a comprehensive report on his peace and security pillar reform proposal, elaborating on the establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, including detailed information on the proposed functions, structure and staffing requirements, for the consideration of and decision by the Assembly, in accordance with established procedures. **The Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly has supported the vision of the Secretary-General for reforming the peace and security pillar as envisaged in his report on restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar (A/72/525).**

III. New structure proposed by the Secretary-General

4. The Secretary-General indicates that his report (A/72/772) is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/199 (see A/72/772, para. 1) (see also para. 28 below). He also indicates that his proposal is centred on the creation of two new departments, with a single regional political-operational structure, and supported by an Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services. The proposal is explained in sections III to V of the report of the Secretary-General and the proposed organization charts are presented in annexes I to V to that report (A/72/772). The new structure, proposed to take effect on 1 January 2019, is outlined below (ibid., paras. 3 and 4 and sects. III, IV and V):

(a) The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, which would combine the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs and the peacebuilding responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Support Office. The Department would have seven components: (i) Office of the Under-Secretary-General; (ii) Policy and Mediation Division; (iii) Electoral Assistance Division; (iv) Security Council Affairs Division; (v) Division for Palestinian Rights; (vi) Decolonization Unit; and (vii) Peacebuilding Support Office;

(b) The Department of Peace Operations, which would include the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs for those field-based special political missions that would henceforth be placed under its purview. The Department would have four components: (i) Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; (ii) Office of Military Affairs; (iii) Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions; and (iv) Policy, Evaluation and Training Division;

(c) A single regional political-operational structure, to be shared by the two new departments, would be responsible for the day-to-day management of all political and operational peace and security activities. The structure would be headed by three Assistant Secretaries-General, who would report to the Under-Secretaries-General of

the two departments. The three Assistant Secretaries-General would cover, respectively: (i) Africa; (ii) Europe, Central Asia and Americas; and (iii) Middle East, Asia and the Pacific;

(d) Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services: it is proposed to redeploy the current post of Chief of Staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support as the Director for Coordination and Shared Services of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The post of Director would be maintained at the current D-2 level, financed from the peacekeeping support account, and would report to the Under-Secretaries-General of both departments to ensure coherence and consistency with regard to management, administration, budgetary and similar processes across the pillar. The Director would also oversee the joint Executive Office, the Leadership Support Section[1] (see also para. 7 (b) below), the Peacekeeping Situation Centre (including the contributions of both departments to the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre),[2] the Strategic Communications Section, the Focal Point for Security, the Information Management Unit and the Registry. Upon enquiry, it was confirmed to the Advisory Committee that, in organizational terms, the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services is indeed a division and not comparable to the front offices of the two Under-Secretaries-General of the two departments.

Proposed resource changes

5. The Secretary-General indicates that his proposal would be cost neutral and would not change the mandates, functions or main funding sources established for the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations or the Peacebuilding Support Office. The use of the support account for peacekeeping operations and the regular budget will remain unchanged, with the exception of the three support account posts being proposed for transfer from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Support Office (see A/72/772, paras. 3, 6 and 7; see also para. 27 (b) below).

6. It is further indicated that the proposed movement of posts on this basis would entail the redistribution of resources within the current appropriation under the approved programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the 2018/19 period, effective 1 January 2019. In this regard, the budget implications for both are presented in section VIII of the report of the Secretary-General. Tables 1 and 2 therein illustrate the movement of human and financial resources between subprogrammes and sections under the proposal (see A/72/772, paras. 6 and 124).

7. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the movement of resources and posts among the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office, as follows:

[1] Proposed to replace the current Senior Leadership Appointment Section under the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support (A/72/772, para. 12 (i)).

[2] As of January 2017, the Secretary-General decided that the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre would report directly to the Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in order to improve and integrate information flow and the coordination of situational awareness and crisis response (see A/72/772, para. 109 and footnote 1).

(a) A total of $270,000, including three posts (2 P-4 and 1 P-2), from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Support Office under other assessed resources (i.e., the support account for peacekeeping operations);

(b) A total of $430,100, for the Senior Leadership Appointments Section, from the Department of Field Support to the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services of the new Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations, including five posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 General Service (Principal level) and 1 General Service (Other level)), under other assessed resources (see para. 44 below);

(c) A total of $531,100, including three posts (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 General Service (Other level)), from the Department of Political Affairs to the Peacebuilding Support Office under the programme budget;

(d) A total of $181,600 (1 P-4 post), from the Department of Political Affairs to the Peacebuilding Support Office under extra-budgetary resources.

8. **The Advisory Committee would have expected some efficiencies to be derived from a restructuring initiative of this magnitude (see also paras. 39–41 below) and more detailed information on the proposed functions, structures and staffing requirements as requested by the General Assembly (see para. 3 above), as well as the potential impact on mandate implementation (see para. 15 below). The Committee also notes from the information provided to it that the proposed changes in resources are mostly related to post changes, while minor changes are reflected under non-post resources after the proposed restructuring. The Committee has no objection to the revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the related part of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2018/19, subject to its comments and recommendations in the present report.**

9. In addition, the Advisory Committee notes, from annex IV to the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772), that a number of posts and positions in the Executive Office of the Office of Director for Coordination and Shared Services relate to the proposed Department of Operational Support under the management reform[3] (see also sect. V below). **The recommendations of the Committee on the proposed management reform and the global service delivery model will be contained in its forthcoming reports.**

1. Single regional political-operational structure

10. The Secretary-General proposes combining the current regional divisions of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations into a single regional political-operational structure (regional structure) that would be shared by the proposed Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations. According to the Secretary-General, the establishment of such a regional structure is at the core of his efforts to integrate the political and operational responsibilities currently residing in two different departments and to develop a holistic peace and security pillar instead of silos and separations (ibid., para. 52).

Roles, responsibilities and reporting lines

11. The single regional structure, to be shared by the two new departments, would be headed by three Assistant Secretaries-General, who would report to the Under-Secretaries-General of the two departments (see para. 4 (c) above). The three

[3] Proposed under the management reform by the Secretary-General in document A/72/492/Add.2.

Assistant Secretaries-General would report to: (a) the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on the global political mandate of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and (b) to the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations on issues related to peacekeeping operations, as well as the field-based special political missions under the purview of the Department of Peace Operations (see A/72/772, paras. 4 and 58–63).

12. The Secretary-General states that the Under-Secretaries-General of the two new departments would work as a team to ensure coherence and a "whole-of-pillar" approach. They would consult closely with each other in providing advice to the Secretary-General and in giving coherent guidance and direction to the Assistant Secretaries-General leading the regional structure, in particular in relation to countries and regions where their respective responsibilities are closely interrelated. Furthermore, the Secretary-General would establish, under his chairmanship, a Standing Principals' Group,[4] which, serving as an internal management and coordination forum, would meet regularly, but would not be part of the institutional structure of the pillar (see A/72/772, para. 5). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Standing Principals' Group would determine its own working and consultation methods and would have the following main functions: (a) to ensure the delivery of advice, based on close consultation and coordination, to the Secretary-General on peace and security matters; (b) to ensure a "whole of pillar" approach by providing coherent and unified leadership and strategic guidance to the peace and security pillar, in particular to the single regional structure, as well as to field presences; and (c) to ensure close coordination and consultation on an ongoing basis with the heads of the offices participating in the Group. **The Committee stresses the importance of ensuring that the Standing Principals' Group would function as intended.**

13. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that as with any organizational restructuring, the proposal carries some challenges and potential risks that can be mitigated or addressed through good management. The dual reporting responsibilities would need careful management and coordination, requiring the two Under-Secretaries-General to work closely and collaboratively on a consistent basis, while the three Assistant Secretaries-General would need to be guided by coordinated leadership and direction from the top. Staff would require a period of adjustment and reorientation, in particular in the combined new regional divisions under the regional structure. Teams and divisions would have a mixture of political and operational responsibilities in mission and non-mission settings. Individuals who might hitherto have focused largely on specific dossiers would need to broaden their horizons as they integrate into divisions with a wider remit. In addition, working more collaboratively, including in conducting analysis collectively or jointly, would require leadership that cultivates a stronger team-oriented approach. Lastly, the working methods and institutional cultures of the two departments and the Peacebuilding Support Office would need to be gradually harmonized. **The Committee trusts that the two Under-Secretaries-General would collaborate and work together in support of a coherent and "whole-of-pillar" approach.**

14. Concerning the dual reporting lines of the three Assistant Secretaries-General, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that there were two main factors in relation to ensuring coherent guidance and tasking: first, clearly defined areas of responsibilities for the two Under-Secretaries-General, as described in paragraphs 20 and 47 of the report of the Secretary-General; and second, close and

[4] Consisting of the Under-Secretaries-General of the two departments, of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and other senior officials, with a view to providing unified leadership for strategic, political and operational responsibilities to facilitate the whole-of-pillar approach and cross-pillar coherence at Headquarters and in the field.

continuous consultation between the two Under-Secretaries-General, including through the Standing Principals' Group under the Chairmanship of the Secretary-General.

15. **Considering the need for the Standing Principals' Group to function in an effective manner, and the risks associated with the potential lack of clarity deriving from dual reporting lines, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to review and report on the functioning of the new structure. In addition, the Committee notes the absence of information pertaining to the individual components (such as services, sections and units) in each division of the proposed single regional structure, as the information is provided only at the division level (see A/72/772, sect. IV and annex V). The Committee trusts that detailed information will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

Regional divisions

16. The Secretary-General proposes the establishment of seven regional divisions, under the responsibility of the three Assistant Secretaries-General in the regional structure, to be led by directors at the D-2 level. The divisions would have responsibility for the broad spectrum of United Nations work relating to early warning, prevention of conflict, peacebuilding, mediation and sustaining peace and peace operations in designated subregions or geographical areas. The directors would report directly to the Assistant Secretaries-General on their respective portfolios (ibid., para. 64). The responsibilities of the directors and the regional divisions are described in paragraphs 65 to 67 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772).

17. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the merger of the regional divisions is a new and unified approach to the delivery of existing mandates, while respecting the approved biennial programme of work (see para. 35 below). Staff of the two new departments, who would cover the entire range of peace and security functions within the defined geographical area, would be structurally integrated into the same division, under the same director and Assistant Secretary-General.

18. It is proposed that the Assistant Secretary-General for Africa would oversee three divisions as follows: (a) West and Central Africa; (b) North Africa and the Horn of Africa; and (c) Southern Africa and Great Lakes (ibid., para. 70). The three divisions would undertake all the current mandated tasks and functions carried out by the four existing Africa Divisions in the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. This would include the provision of strategic, political and operational guidance and support to 10 special political missions and 7 peacekeeping operations (ibid., para. 71). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while the Secretary-General had considered other ways of delineating the regional divisions for Africa, including the creation of four distinct and geographically based divisions, he believes the proposal for three regional divisions to be the most practical and achievable within the parameters of cost neutrality and workload distribution. Furthermore, under the proposed arrangement, each of the three divisions would provide adequate coverage at Headquarters, with the fourth D-2 post proposed in order to support a priority area of work, namely the Sahel (see paras. 21 and 22 below). The Committee was further informed that stand-alone divisions for Central Africa and for West Africa and the Sahel would be possible. If all of the posts of the current four Africa divisions were to be retained within the new single regional structure, this would mean that three of the posts proposed for redeployment to the Peacebuilding Support Office could not be redeployed (1 P-5 Senior Political Affairs Officer from the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs, 1 P-4 Political Affairs Officer from the Somalia Coordination and Planning Team of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and

1 Assistant (General Service (Other level)) from the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs). The Committee was informed that this would significantly diminish efforts to strengthen the Office (see also paras. 27–32 below).

19. With respect to the proposed transfer of functions related to Central Asia to the proposed Europe, Central Asia and Americas Division, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that currently one P-4, funded from extra-budgetary resources, is focused on Central Asia in the Middle East and West Asia Division of the Department of Political Affairs. Under the proposal, that P-4 post would be part of the Europe and Central Asia Division and would be placed in the team responsible for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The Committee was further informed that several ways of delineating regional divisions had been considered and that the major considerations include: existing divisional configurations and available staffing in current divisions; geopolitical factors and thematic/cross-regional issues; the existence and configuration of regional and subregional organizations; and the need to achieve a balance between mission mandates and non-mission responsibilities in a given division; as well as prospects for special political mission and peacekeeping missions working more closely together. The proposed restructuring does not therefore imply a change in political emphasis vis-à-vis the regional divisions. Moreover, the Committee was informed that the areas of priority for sections 3 and 5 of the programme budget would not change under the proposed structure (see also para. 36 below).

20. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the appropriateness and functioning of the arrangement proposed for the regional divisions under the single regional political-operational structure need to be assessed, as appropriate, against the workload of the regional divisions, in particular those in Africa, where the peace and security work of the Organization is significant, to ensure the implementation of mandates in the most effective and efficient manner.**

Relocation of a D-2 post to Nouakchott

21. Concerning the West and Central Africa Division, it is indicated that the Secretary-General has made significant efforts to reinvigorate the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, as detailed in his report to the Security Council on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) (S/2017/1104). In order to support those efforts, the Division would comprise a D-2-level director dedicated to the Sahel dossier, to be based in Nouakchott. The Director would further assist the implementation of the strategy and support the efforts to assist the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, serving as the main United Nations liaison with and entry point for interactions with the secretariat of the Group. The Director would liaise with Member States and regional, international and non-governmental entities. While having a functional link to the Division, the Director would work under the overall supervision of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and Deputy Special Representative (see A/72/772, para. 78). **The Advisory Committee notes that the relocation of the D-2 post from New York to Nouakchott, is not included in the summary of post changes listed in paragraph 123 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772).**

22. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNOWAS remains central in the efforts to recalibrate the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel as required by its mandate, which encompasses support to the implementation of the strategy and the coordination of international and regional engagements in the Sahel. Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the proposed D-2 Director would also coordinate, through UNOWAS, with the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for

the Sahel. In that connection, the Committee recalls that it was informed on 20 March 2018 that the Secretary-General had decided to establish the position of Special Adviser for the Sahel, at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, based in Dakar, for a period of 11 months (starting from 1 April 2018), funded by voluntary contributions, via a "50/50" arrangement between the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme. The Special Adviser will work in close collaboration with UNOWAS and the United Nations Development Group and be responsible for assisting with overall oversight and coordination for the implementation for the strategy. The incumbent will also liaise with the multiple actors in the region and engage with national and regional authorities and international partners. **Taking into account the functions currently assigned to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and the recently appointed Special Adviser for the Sahel (Assistant Secretary-General), the Committee is not convinced of the justification provided for the relocation of the D-2 post from New York to Nouakchott in the context of the proposal. The Committee requests that more information be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

2. Field-based special political missions proposed to be placed under the purview of the Department of Peace Operations

23. As indicated in paragraph 10 above, the Secretary-General proposes that the Department of Peace Operations assume the responsibilities of the existing Department of Political Affairs with respect to two field-based special political missions: the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (see A/72/772, para. 3).

24. The Advisory Committee enquired as to the criteria for proposing an alternative arrangement for UNAMA and UNAMI, noting that these two missions are currently included in the 11 field-based special political missions under thematic cluster III according to the established categorization in the programme budget (among them the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (see A/72/7/Add.10, p. 3). The Committee was informed that the nature and scale of special political missions vary considerably and that, under the current circumstances, the Secretary-General considers that UNAMA and UNAMI are the most appropriate for management by the Department of Peace Operations, and that UNAMA, for most of its existence, has been managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Committee was further informed that future decisions on the management of field-based special political missions might need to be made on a case-by-case basis until a definitive set of criteria could be arrived at through experience.

25. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that a clear set of criteria should have been set out for the transfer of the backstopping of field-based special political missions to the proposed Department of Peace Operations, in particular taking into account the experience that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had gained through the management of UNAMA until 30 September 2014 and the rationale for the transfer of the lead responsibility to the Department of Political Affairs since that time (see para. 26 below). The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to set out a clear set of such criteria with a view to ensuring clarity and that logical and consistent organizational backstopping arrangements are in place to service field-based special political missions.**

26. A related matter is the funding of backstopping capacity at Headquarters. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while UNAMA and UNAMI would remain special political missions and that the proposed budgets for the two

missions would continue to be reflected under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget, substantive backstopping at Headquarters would be provided by the Department of Peace Operations. As for the funding of the backstopping posts for UNAMA at Headquarters, the Committee recalls that, upon transfer of the lead responsibility for UNAMA from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs as at 1 October 2014, three posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) funded under the support account for 2014/15 were temporarily loaned from the then-disbanded Afghanistan integrated operational team in the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs and that the posts were later established under UNAMA budget from 1 January 2015 (see A/69/628, paras. 42 and 43). **The Committee notes that no information is provided in the report on the funding of the backstopping capacity for UNAMA and UNAMI at Headquarters as a result of the proposed transfer to the Department of Peace Operations from 1 January 2019. The Committee trusts that information in this regard will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

3. Peacebuilding Support Office

27. It is proposed to strengthen the Peacebuilding Support Office by transferring a total of seven posts (3 posts funded from the programme budget, 3 posts funded from the support account and 1 post funded from extrabudgetary resources), which is made possible through the capacities freed up by the merger of the regional divisions and the creation of a single executive office for the two new departments (see A/72/772, para. 122). The proposed transfer of the seven posts are as follows (ibid., para. 123):

(a) Under the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, the redeployment of: (i) one Assistant General Service (Other level) from the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs to the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General; (ii) one Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) from the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs to the Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnership Branch; and (iii) the reassignment of one Executive Officer (D-1) from the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs as Principal Political Affairs Officer in the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch;

(b) Under the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2018/19, the redeployment of: (i) one Associate Political Affairs Officer (P-2) from the Asia, Middle East, Europe and Latin America Division of the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General; (ii) one Political Affairs Officer (P-4) from the Somalia Coordination and Planning Team of the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch; and (iii) one Political Affairs Officer (P-4) from the Partnership Team of the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch;

(c) Under extrabudgetary resources, the redeployment of one Political Affairs Officer (P-4) from the Policy Planning Unit of the Policy and Mediation Division of the Department of Political Affairs to the Peacebuilding Strategy and Partnerships Branch.

28. On a related matter, the Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General submitted a report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) on 18 January 2018, pursuant to paragraph 30 of General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture. In that report, the Secretary-General proposes that the capacity of the Peacebuilding Support Office be strengthened within the existing resources of the

peace and security pillar. He also asks Member States to consider favourably his detailed proposals for the restructuring of the peace and security pillar and to enhance the capacities of the Peacebuilding Support Office and other parts of the proposed Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, including through the use of the peacekeeping support account for peacebuilding activities in relevant peacekeeping settings (see A/72/707-S/2018/43, para. 20). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the Secretary-General is not proposing further use of resources funded from the support account in other parts of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

29. With regard to the relationship of the two reports on the restructuring of the peace and security pillar and on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/772 and A/72/707-S/2018/43), in particular in terms of strengthening the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) connects the revitalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office with the proposed restructuring of the peace and security pillar, building upon its existing work in support of the development-humanitarian-peacebuilding continuum. The Secretary-General indicates that the Office will function as a "hinge" between the peace and security pillar and the other pillars and with the humanitarian community (ibid., para. 19). The Committee was further informed that, since the revitalization of the Support Office is linked to the restructuring of the peace and security pillar, the outcome of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on peacebuilding and sustaining peace on 24 and 25 April 2018 would not result in additional revised estimates for the revitalization of the Office.[5]

30. The Advisory Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the Support Office would continue to rely on secondments from United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and the use of Junior Professional Officers, in particular for vital policy-related tasks. In addition, the staffing needs of the Financing for Peacebuilding Branch would continue to be met through overhead charges to the Peacebuilding Fund (extrabudgetary resources) and, if contributions to the Fund were to increase, leading to the Fund programming a greater volume of resources, there could be an increase in both staffing requirements and posts for the Branch.

31. Concerning the reassignment of the D-1 post of the Executive Officer from the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs as Principal Political Affairs Officer in the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch (see para. 27 (a) (iii) above), the Advisory Committee notes that the functions of this post would change fundamentally. **The Committee reiterates that posts should either be utilized for the purposes for which they were intended or proposed for abolishment (see A/72/7, para. 98). The Committee therefore recommends that the D-1 post of the Executive Officer in the Department of Political Affairs should be abolished and be established as a Principal Political Affairs Officer in the Peacebuilding Commission Support Branch, with the application of a 50 per cent vacancy rate for 2019, following the established budget methodology for the programme budget (ibid., para. 44).**

32. With respect to the proposed redeployment of three posts (2 P-4 and 1 P-2) funded under the support account from the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Support Office (see para. 27 (b) above), the Secretary-General indicates that, under his proposal, the use of the support account for peacekeeping operations and the regular budget would remain

[5] The General Assembly adopted resolution 72/276.

unchanged,* with the exception of those three support account posts to perform tasks that are significantly related to peacekeeping and intended to support the growing emphasis of Member States on the peacebuilding objectives under peacekeeping mandates (see A/72/772, paras. 7 and 28). **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has decided and reaffirmed that the support account funds shall be used for the sole purpose of financing human resources and non-human resources requirements for backstopping and supporting peacekeeping operations at Headquarters, and that any changes in this limitation require the prior approval of the General Assembly (see General Assembly resolutions 49/250 and 71/295). Moreover, the Assembly has recognized the temporary nature of support account posts and decided in this regard that measures introduced by the Secretary-General in connection with the regular budget shall not be extended to those posts (see General Assembly resolution 50/221 A). In the absence of a policy change by the General Assembly, the Committee recommends against the proposed redeployment of the three posts (2 P-4 and 1 P-2) funded under the support account from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Support Office. The three posts should therefore be abolished, as at 1 January 2019, in the context of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2019/19 (see A/72/857). Related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

4. Gender units of the two new departments

33. It is indicated that the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations would comprise a front office, including a Gender Unit (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) to be transferred from the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which would work closely with the Gender, Peace and Security Team in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs to ensure a holistic approach to women and peace and security issues through their distinct mandates (see A/72/772, para. 48). Upon enquiry as to why it is proposed to have two separate units for gender-related issues in the two new departments, the Advisory Committee was informed that the two departments' gender entities have complementary but different functions and expertise, including in the areas of policy development, operational engagement and programming. While the focus of the gender unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) is on conflict prevention, mediation support, and women's political participation related to peacemaking and peacebuilding, the women, peace and security mandate is related to the management of and response to conflict, as well as sustaining peace and prevention through peacekeeping.

34. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced of the justification provided for having two separate units on gender-related issues for the two new departments. The Committee is of the view that a single and merged gender unit under the pillar would enhance policy coherence and could lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness in line with the whole-of-pillar approach for the proposed restructuring of the peace and security pillar.**

* The Secretary-General indicates in his report on the management reform that he wishes to submit a proposal to the General Assembly at the second part of its seventy-fourth session to establish a clear and consistent approach to financing the two new departments for operational support and management from the support account based on the initial experience gained from the implementation of the "whole-of-the-Secretariat" approach (A/72/492/Add.2, para. 66).

IV. Relationship to the biennial programme plan, the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the support account for peacekeeping operations

Biennial programme plan and programme budget

35. The Secretary-General indicates that his proposals set out in the report (A/72/772) do not give rise to any changes in the approved objectives, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements or outputs related to programme 2, Political affairs, and programme 4, Peacekeeping operations, of the biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019 (A/71/6/Rev.1) or to section 3, Political affairs, and section 5, Peacekeeping operations, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 3) and A/72/6 (Sect. 5)) (see A/72/772, para. 10). Nonetheless, the modifications required throughout the programmes of the biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019 (A/71/6/Rev.1) and throughout the sections of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 3 and 5)) are listed in paragraph 12 (a) to (i) of the report (A/72/772). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed restructuring would not change the priorities of the programmes of work of the Secretariat entities involved. **The Committee notes that the proposed transfer of some posts may have a potential impact on indicators of achievements or outputs and expects that information in that regard will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

36. With respect to the impact of the merger into the proposed single regional structure, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that it is proposed that the wording "single political-operational regional structure under the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations" replace the wording "regional divisions" under programmes 2 and 4 of the biennial programme plan for 2018–2019 and under sections 3 and 5 of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, and the wording "Office of Operations" under programme 4 of the biennial programme plan for 2018–2019 and section 5 of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. As for the funding under the programme budget, the current resources for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would continue to appear under section 5 of the proposed Department of Peace Operations, while the resources allocated to the regional divisions would continue to appear under section 3 for the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. However, the Committee was further informed that the restructuring would not give rise to any changes in the strategic framework, such as approved objectives, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements or outputs related to programme 2, Political affairs and section 3, Political affairs, and programme 4, Peacekeeping operations and section 5, Peacekeeping operations.

Support account for peacekeeping operations

37. The Secretary-General further indicates that his proposals also relate to the results-based-budgeting framework set out in his report on the budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/72/790). A summary of the proposed post changes under the support account for peacekeeping operations for the 2018/19 financial period is provided in paragraph 123 (b) (i) to (vi) of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772). The proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2018/19 (A/72/790) is based on the proposal contained in the report (A/72/772). The report of the Advisory Committee on the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations is contained in document A/72/857.

38. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, with respect to the actions required of the General Assembly as contained in paragraph 127 (c) of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772), the proposed actions include approval of the proposed resources, including the strengthening of the Peacebuilding Support Office, in the context of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the 2018/19 period. This refers to the three posts (2 P-4 and 1 P-2) proposed for redeployment from the current Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Peacebuilding Support Office under the support account. The approval of paragraph 127 (c) is considered approval of the proposed transfer of the three posts as reflected in the proposed budget for the support account budget for the 2018/19 period (see also para. 27 (b) above; see para. 32 above for the recommendations of the Committee).

Efficiency and effectiveness

39. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, from the outset, the Secretary-General has stressed that his reforms are not a cost-cutting exercise, but are aimed at making the pillar more effective. **The Committee notes that it is not clear how enhanced effectiveness, one of the four objectives of the reform (see para. 2 above), could be measured, as no changes are envisaged in the approved expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements or outputs related to the respective programmes (see para. 35 above).**

40. The Advisory Committee also enquired as to whether a comprehensive staffing review had been undertaken for the proposed restructuring, in particular with regard to the single regional structure. The Committee was informed that a review had been undertaken to assess the roles and responsibilities of all the posts in the regional divisions of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In the view of the Secretariat, the merger into a single structure would not change the current workload and it is expected that the workload would increase given the growing scope and complexity of the peace and security responsibilities of the Organization, including the increasing diplomatic and representational responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the heads of departments in support of the Secretary-General, and the level of engagement with Member States. As for why some divisions would have one D-2 and more than one D-1, the Committee was informed that the number of D-1 Principal Officers would range from one to three in a division, depending on the workload.

41. **The Advisory Committee notes that, of the 849 existing posts currently approved for the two departments[7] (excluding those of the Peacebuilding Support Office), the proposed restructuring yields limited efficiencies, in particular with regard to the merger into a single regional structure and an Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services serving the two new departments. The Committee would have expected that a major organizational initiative of this magnitude, involving two large existing departments, would have led to economies of scale and resources freed up by eliminating duplication of efforts. The Committee is therefore of the view that, rather than co-location of offices, the proposed single regional structure and executive offices should lead to more efficiencies and efforts should continue to identify efficiencies, including post reductions.**

42. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes that, in the proposed Executive Office of the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services

[7] The Department of Political Affairs has 263 posts funded under the regular budget and 51 under the extrabudgetary resources, while the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has 27 posts under the regular budget, 446 under the support account and 62 under extrabudgetary resources.

(A/72/7/772, annex IV), there are a total of 21 General Service-level posts and positions funded under the regular budget, the support account and extrabudgetary resources. **Taking into account the potential efficiencies to be achieved within the proposed single Executive Office of the two new departments, the Committee recommends the abolishment of two posts (General Service (Other level)) under the regular budget for the biennium 2018–2019. Related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

V. Link to other reforms proposed by the Secretary-General

43. The Secretary-General indicates that his management reforms are as crucial as his reforms to the peace and security architecture to improving the ability of the Organization to respond to challenges to international peace and security (see A/72/772, para. 118). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while the objectives are similar, the two reforms cover different aspects of the Secretariat's functioning and that the proposals are not interlinked and will proceed separately. Should one be approved and not the other, it is entirely possible to conceive of a functional solution whereby one side (management or peace and security) is unchanged and not the other.

44. The Advisory Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that, while the Department of Peacekeeping is covered under the peace and security reforms and the Department of Field Support is covered under the management reforms, there are a few exceptions. These include: (a) the proposed embedding of six support officers in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peace Operations, budgeted currently under the Department of Field Support and proposed to be under the Department of Operational Support (see paras. 46 and 47 below); (b) the transfer of the Senior Leadership Appointment Section from the Office of the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Field Support to the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services (see paras. 4 (d) and 7 (b) above); and (c) the transfer, to the Department of Operational Support, of a number of posts (i) from the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support (Executive Office and Focal Point for Security), and (ii) from the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to be embedded in the Integrated Training Service and Peace Operations Policy and Best Practices Service. **As indicated in paragraph 9 above, the recommendations of the Committee on the proposed management reform and the global service delivery model will be contained in its forthcoming reports.**

45. The Secretary-General further indicates that coordination between the management and support structure and the peace and security pillar would be part of the normal course of work of the departments, but would also be further facilitated through mechanisms at various levels to ensure the successful establishment, functioning and transitioning of peace and security field presences. At the strategic level, this would be achieved through the representation of the peace and security pillar on a Management Client Board, the internal governance mechanism for the proposed new management structure. At the operational level, a pool of six specialized officers from the Department of Operational Support would be embedded in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations (see A/72/772, para. 119).

46. Concerning the six (3 P-5 and 3 P-4) of the current seven officers of the Department of Field Support supporting the integrated operational teams in the existing Office of Operations, it is indicated in paragraph 48 of the report that they

would be relocated to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General of the proposed Department of Peace Operations (to be budgeted under the proposed Department of Operational Support). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as part of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the establishment of the Department of Field Support in 2007, Department of Field Support mission support officers from the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General were embedded in the then newly established integrated operational teams along with specialized political, military, police and rule of law capabilities, to facilitate an integrated approach to the Headquarters backstopping of peacekeeping missions. Of the seven integrated operational team posts currently approved,[8] it is proposed, under the management reform, to (a) reassign one post of senior administrative officer (P-5) to the new Support Partnerships Service in the Department of Operational Support as a senior programme officer; and (b) transfer the other six officers to the Office of the Director for Special Activities in the Department of Operational Support, with two posts of senior administrative officer (P-5) proposed to be downgraded to administrative officer (P-4). In addition, two practical changes to their functions are proposed: first, the officers, who currently perform functions as generalists in mission support, would be required to perform as specialists in the areas of supply chain management, human resources, budget and finance and information and communications technology; and second, the officers, who are currently embedded in integrated operational teams, would become a pooled resource located in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, to be drawn upon as required to support the requirements of the different integrated operational teams within the regional structure.

47. **The Advisory Committee notes that information with respect to the current and proposed functions of the six posts is not clearly presented, in particular concerning how the proposed arrangement would work in practical terms and why their location in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General is deemed preferable to the current arrangements, by which they are with the integrated operational teams within the Office of Operations. Furthermore, the Committee notes that their proposed specialized functions, in the areas of supply chain management, human resources, budget and finance and information and communications technology, would be available in the proposed Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services (see para. 4 (d) above). The Committee expects that detailed information and clarification should therefore be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

48. With respect to the functions of the proposed new joint executive office within the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services, it is indicated that, in his report to the General Assembly entitled "Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: ensuring a better future for all" (A/72/492), the Secretary-General has proposed that executive offices assume the role of "business partner". The envisaged functions are described in paragraph 113 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772). **While the Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposed establishment of the Office of the Director for Coordination and Shared Services for the two new departments, this should not be considered as an endorsement of the proposed "business partner" concept, which will be considered separately in the forthcoming reports of the Committee on the**

[8] One Senior Logistics Officer (P-5, for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur-United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei) and six Senior Administrative Officers (5 P-5 and 1 P-4, for UNMISS, West Africa, Central Africa, Europe, Latin America and Asia, Middle East and North Africa and the Great Lakes)

management reform and global service delivery model proposed by the Secretary-General.

49. **In addition, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the coordination functions to be undertaken by the Director for Coordination and Shared Services, serving the two new departments and the single regional structure, with functions significantly different from those of the existing Chief of Staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, should be kept under review if approved by the General Assembly.**

VI. Conclusion

50. The actions requested of the General Assembly are set out in paragraph 127 (a) to (c) of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/772). **The recommendations of the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 31 and 42 above would entail a reduction of $268,000 to the revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (see also paras. 32, 37 and 38 above. Subject to its comments and recommendations above, the Committee has no objection to the revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the related part of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2018/19.**